

# THE LABOUR ORGANISER.

No. 4.

DECEMBER, 1920.

Price 4d.

## AN APPRECIATION.

By the Right Hon. ARTHUR HENDERSON, M.P.

**I** WELCOME the appearance of THE LABOUR ORGANISER as an attempt to provide the political Labour Movement with a technical journal devoted to the law and practice of registration, elections and kindred subjects.

Nothing is so essential to the success of the political side of the Labour Movement as a body of Election Agents not only possessing the necessary enthusiasm, but the highest equipment for the technical and legal branches of their work. To this end, the columns of THE LABOUR ORGANISER should largely be devoted. But the Journal may be made a useful medium of information not only to those who are professionally engaged in political organisation or electioneering, but to all who may be seeking to make the Labour Party a greater political power in this country.

It is satisfactory, therefore, to find space devoted to the treatment of the best methods of advertising, organising and propaganda. It must be obvious that the Movement has within its ranks a great deal of experience in these subjects, and a great many ideas which would be of the utmost value if published and circulated amongst our active workers. If THE LABOUR ORGANISER, through its columns, can bring within reach of our voluntary workers, as well as our experts, a full knowledge of these things, it will be doing a great work for the Party.

The printing of forms, leaflets and other publications in your Journal will enable many of our people, without much experience, to copy the best and most effective models in use by the Party. The spreading of this information will be very valuable in increasing the efficiency of our work. Local Labour Parties everywhere should secure copies for their ward officials and workers generally.

I hope THE LABOUR ORGANISER will have a successful career and prepare the way for a larger and fuller publication.

# AN ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL NEWSPAPERS.

## *The "Labour Organiser" Scheme.*

### *Closer Unity for News, Advertisement, and Circulation Purposes.*

Since the war the number of Labour local newspapers has greatly increased, and during the present year the movement for establishing same has received considerable impetus. The extent of this journalism is now a matter of real importance in the Movement, and a substantial addition to the number of local journals in existence may be expected in the New Year.

In the opinion of THE LABOUR ORGANISER the time is now ripe when all these ventures, some of them of considerable importance from a Party and a business point of view, should be brought into touch with one another for the purpose, first, of discussion of problems common to all of them, and in the next place to consider the establishment of some kind of permanent association for promoting the welfare and prosperity of all such publications.

THE LABOUR ORGANISER therefore invites communications from all existing Labour local newspapers expressing their views on the desirability, or date, of a proposed conference of representatives at which the matters referred to may be discussed.

In the meantime we propose (1) to devote such space in this paper as is necessary to the discussion of business matters concerning the prosperity of such papers, and (2) to proceed with the collection of further data as to the number, size, circulation, price, etc., of existing journals, and the exact proposals of contemplated new issues.

One of the vital problems and greatest difficulties concerning Labour journals is the failure to attract advertisers. The latter will not look at the small and limited circulations offered. We believe the difficulty can be reduced by an association acting as a central agency for dealing with big advertisers, and who could offer

insertion in a large number of local journals in a single contract.

Many journals experience trouble in obtaining special articles, etc. We believe an association would be a useful medium for the supply of special articles and kindred matters. Reproduction in various newspapers in different localities would cheapen costs.

Many journals suffer from distributive defects, publication difficulties, and want of stimulus to circulation. We believe a live association could give guidance in such matters. By bringing papers together and promoting co-operation, evils could be scotched and success achieved.

Many journals suffer because the practical business experience is lacking. We believe the brains that run our *successful* papers could, through an association, help to guide the weaker ones while still reaping advantage to themselves.

Many journals are in embryo to-day. Ought we to allow them to start unaided and to pass into oblivion "unwept, unhonoured, and unsung," as so many have, while local Parties despair and opposing papers flourish? An association could guide them through the perilous beginning, and help to set them on their feet.

The enemy's newspapers are combining. *You perhaps don't realise to what extent that has been carried.* THE LABOUR ORGANISER proposal is not a combine in that sense, but an association for co-operation and mutual advantage that, if successful, will add tremendously to the power of Labour's Press and *all* our local papers, with all that that means to Labour's influence and earlier triumph.

Please get this matter raised on your newspapers committee. There are at present no details to discuss, merely this: shall we hold that Conference—and when?



## THAT OUT-OF-DATE MINUTE BOOK

Who hasn't sympathised at times with the long-suffering secretary of this or that body compelled to carry about, from meeting to meeting, the voluminous minute book in addition to other more or less necessary papers? The old-fashioned minute book is a bulky business, and in addition to the uselessness of conveying to each meeting long past records for which there is no real need of reference, there are the unused pages, all of which is so much unnecessary weight and bulk. An objection of even greater importance is the fatigue of laborious hand-written pages with the temptation to scamp records, and the waste of time involved.

The secretary who possesses, or can borrow, a typewriter has great advantages here. He types on to loose sheets, and his minute book now is a cheap binder, or if needs be a more elaborate and expensive loose-leaf file. He carries about now no useless blank pages: only the really necessary live records—just as far back as seems desirable. The labour of handwriting is gone, minutes are easily decipherable. But there is more. At scores of our meetings time is wasted reading minutes, and the reading does not always make the transactions of business clear. With the typewriter the secretary can, for small executives, produce enough carbon copies at the one operation of typing to supply all the E.C. before the meeting with a copy of the last minutes. Time is saved and business done is clear to all. For supplying larger meetings with minutes it is necessary to cut a wax stencil and duplicate the copies. It is a simple operation, and all secretaries should have a duplicator, or co-operative arrangements for duplicating can be made where practicable. But what a saving of time, what clarity, and how much more efficiently can your business be conducted.

## LAW AND PRACTICE.

*[Under this heading we propose to print brief and chatty explanations of points of commoner interest concerning the Law and Practice of Elections. Readers are invited to suggest points for notice herein, but are reminded that suggestions made may not necessarily be dealt with in the next issue.—ED.]*

## When Does the Election Begin?

By THE EDITOR.

Why? Fire that query back at the man who asks the above question, and one finds there is never any other reason than the application of the answer to election expenses, and the point as to what does and what does not rank as such. Nobody, one supposes, asks the question because they want deliberately to commit a certain act in the fancied safety of a period before the election begins, which act they would not commit afterwards, for it matters nothing when a corrupt or illegal act is done to influence an election—the offence remains an offence just the same.

But the question may be asked for just one other reason—because of the necessity of appointing an agent. I am not going to deal with that matter in this article, except to point out that the very moment the election begins (or that you begin it, as we shall see) the appointment of an agent, not necessarily the final agent or a paid agent, becomes imperative; for the Representation of the People Act, 1918, added a corrupt practice to those previously existing, and those persons who incur any expenses on account of holding public meetings or issuing advertisements, circulars or publications for the purpose of promoting or procuring the election of a candidate *unless authorised in writing to do so by the election agent*, are guilty of a "corrupt practice," punishable by heavy fine or imprisonment.

But, as I have suggested, the question is not usually asked with a view to observing correctitude in that regard, but because expenses are in contemplation which it is feared might be required to be "returned." The awkwardness of having reduced the amount available for expenses at the actual election (by the sums previously

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has entered

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COMPETITION?**

See about it To-day!

spent), and also the risks attendant on taking the other course and suppressing the items, are probably both present to the mind of the questioner—but that other risk, the risk of incurring *any* expense without an agent, is not so considered, and is not so commonly known.

Now, there is no clear authority or guidance as to the precise date, or action, or event, that heralds the "commencement" of the election. A definition of a "candidate" is given in the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Prevention Act, 1883; but that is not the same thing, and the psychological moment of becoming a candidate is not synonymous with the moment of commencing the election. Indeed, it is conceivable that a person may have begun the election by incurring certain expenses even before he has announced himself or been announced by others as a candidate. That actually *does* occur. Expenses may be incurred in *expectation* which afterwards rank.

The only tangible thing to go upon is the view taken by Election Judges of election expenses. And judges have wisely attached more importance to anything that might be done "for the purpose of promoting or procuring the election of a candidate" than they have to the date of the writ or the date of the vacancy.

The one thing now clear is that any expense for the above purpose *must* be returned, whenever incurred. It therefore also becomes clear that when expense *has* been incurred the election has *certainly begun*—whether at that moment, or by some previous definite action, without cost, doesn't really matter. And from now on there are pitfalls for everybody, and peculiar relationships to avoid in what is known as "agency" (of which we shall deal in some future number). A circumstance has been created that embarrasses in many directions. And it were better not so.

Our question is now answered; but there must be many readers who are feeling just a little uncomfortable and wondering what *can* be done before an election. Put yourself another question: Which, in the last analysis, is of greater importance to Labour—(1) the propaganda of its principles, the organisation and increase of its forces and the strengthening of its machinery, or (2) the strategical course of a cam-

paign devoted to the election of a particular person or persons? You agree, the first? Then you are right, and the Law for once is on our side. For you can do all that is indicated in the first clause. You can propagate, carry on, organise, conduct registration work, indulge in campaigns to increase your membership—all this and more also. Your chosen one may take part in that work—provided you confine it to party organisation, to the advocacy of general party principles, and not to the advocacy of your particular candidate. Directly you begin to particularise or centre your organisation round your man, there is danger. Your candidate may certainly speak, but if he speaks of what he will do if you elect him to the House of Commons, or if you start pledging meetings—well, it's just an election expense.

The expense of maintaining a Parliamentary agent and of doing Registration work is not an election expense—so say the Judges. Nor is the expense of holding a meeting to select a candidate an election expense. But just here decisions stop short. Can a candidate incur expenses for the purpose of *procuring selection* as a candidate without them ranking afterwards as election expenses? There is a legal inference that that could be done, and this point became very important during a famous by-election of the present year, when the friend of one candidate spent several thousand pounds in an alleged plebiscite of the electors in the interests of his *protege* before the latter definitely came forward. Authorities differed on the legality of that action, but in my opinion it would be a mighty lax Judge who would except that expense in view of the proximity of the election, the existence of the vacancy, and the "agency" that was clearly evidenced later with the condonation of the candidate. I say nothing of the fact that the pretended plebiscite was no real selection, and hence could not be an expense of a candidature for selection. It was, in fact, an election address issued through a friendly party.

But I do not intend to deal in this article with what is legal expenditure and what is not. My subject has concerned itself more with when legal expenditure should be made. And the other matter will be given light in a future article in due course.



*THE LEADING WORK ON ELECTION LAW.*

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of a Returning Officer  
at a Parliamentary Election in  
England and Wales**

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*BY THE LATE*  
**FRANK R. PARKER.**

**THIRD EDITION**  
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*OF THE INNER TEMPLE, BARRISTER-AT-LAW.*

**LONDON:**  
**CHAS. KNIGHT & CO., Ltd., 227-239, TOOLEY ST., S.E. 1.**

## PUBLICITY-POWER IN THE LABOUR MOVEMENT.

By H. STEPHENS  
(Labour Agent, King's Lynn Division).

THE power of well-directed publicity is only now beginning to be measured and appreciated by the Labour movement. The enemy has long ago realised it and used it to the full—most often to the detriment of Labour, industrially and politically. "Propaganda," to me, means a great deal more than the mere enunciation of the movement's policy on the platform. It does mean that, of course, but it should also manifest itself in every legitimate form of printed or typed matter we issue. Every poster, handbill, circular, etc., should be so conceived as to carry some propaganda-value—some message to the man (and woman) in the street. The use of printed and duplicated matter in our movement is rapidly growing, hence the writer's hope that this modest contribution may be of service to the active spirits in our Party.

Every form of our publicity should have a single and distinct aim. It has been well said that "Some men write without getting anywhere in particular. Aiming at nothing, they hit their mark." Generally, we should aim, ever and always, at creating the impression on the reader that nothing is so important and estimable to him as the promise of the Labour movement. To create this impression, various elements may be embodied in the make-up of our particular form of publicity. These elements will be found later on in this article. Our "style-aim" should be to create a "distinctive" tone, and we should never be afraid of departing from the orthodox.

Posters. Many posters issued by Labour Parties suffer from typographical anaemia, anarchy in design, and a general "run-down" appearance. They represent so much wasted money—so much wasted opportunity. Usually a poster needs bold and strong handling in copy and display. The first requisite of a poster is the "power of arrest." This may be obtained by (1) good "copy"; (2) clever arrangement of typography; (3) judicious choice of colours of ink and paper; (4) unorthodox size or shape of poster. A method of treatment which I have

found very successful is to abandon entirely the formula heading, "Blank Labour Party," and to place at head of poster a dominating, striking and topical line, with a suitable quotation on occasion, such as—

(A) *Heading only.*

## STRANGLE THE WAR!

"The cannon's prey has begun to think, and, thinking twice, loses its admiration for being made a target."—Victor Hugo.

(B) *Heading only.*

## WORLD-WIDE DEMONSTRATIONS A G A I N S T W A R !

"They will cheat you yet, these Junkers."

Coloured paper is the most effective. Grouping of matter is an essential element in the lay-out of a good poster. White space plays an important part.

Handbills lend themselves to more tasteful treatment than they usually receive. Here again I strongly recommend the use of coloured paper. Black is the usual colour of ink used, and black ink on white paper—when several lines are display lines—gives a funereal and depressing impression. Our message is not a Death Song. Grouping and space are again important.

Leaflet propaganda is becoming a very prominent feature of our work. The copy should be terse, lucid, brief, bright, to the point. A crown octavo leaflet should resemble a leaflet, and should not attempt to masquerade as a reprint of Marx's "Das Kapital." Nine out of ten people to whom we are issuing leaflets probably do not care a tinker's curse (or a Labour Agent's) about Coalition, Labour, or Mumbo Jumbo. Our task is to *interest* them and to persuade them to read our leaflets, so we must study their point of view, plan our mental attack, and ambush their attention. Again, good, powerful and striking headlines are essential. Dull, stodgy text matter should be banned; rather should our leaflets resemble the fluidity of sparkling wine and breathe its atmosphere of good cheer.



Form letters (mailed) are destined to play an important part in the propaganda of our movement. The use of a good form letter, typed, and copied on a duplicator, is one of the easiest, speediest, cheapest and most effective methods of "getting acquainted" with vast armies of the electorate. This form of publicity, perhaps, needs more care, skill, judgment and understanding than any other. If the poster is our bludgeon, the form letter should be our rapier. It is able to invade thousands of places forbidden to Labour workers. It silently and inoffensively gets itself installed in the homes of the rich and poor alike, and on to the desk of the business man. Form letters should be brief, courteous, frank and lucid, possess news-value, personality, and the "You" element—not so much "us" or "we." They should be couched in terms such as one would use in an actual friendly conversation with the person addressed.

Some knowledge of psychology is essential in the production of successful publicity matter, and a business acquaintance with an up-to-date printer would be a tremendous help. A systematic observation and study of the clever productions of the big advertisers will give stimulus and provoke ideas. The practice of the art of publicity writing does not guarantee success to the movement—it is, after all, only one of our weapons—but it does help very largely to strengthen and expand our movement, and, above all, it ensures that Labour's printed case shall go out well-dressed, commanding attention and interest—often, even, from inveterate enemies.



## THE BIG PUSH IN LONDON.

### Great Simultaneous Campaign for Individual Members.

After the advocacy in THE LABOUR ORGANISER last month of a National Campaign for women's membership—a National Labour Women's Week—it is particularly interesting to note that the London Labour Party are making arrangements for a huge, simultaneous campaign for individual members, both men and women, throughout its great area. The recommendation, it appears, came from one

of the agents' Conferences, which not only in London, but in most parts of the country, are becoming a feature in Party organisation, greatly to its benefit.

It is suggested that the campaign should be opened and continue throughout the first week in May. Meetings during that week would be discouraged in all the London constituencies except upon the final night, and the whole forces of the Local Parties concentrated on a simultaneous canvass, either of Trade Unionists alone or of the entire electorate, for the express purpose of enrolment of individual members. The campaign in its larger aspects would be under the auspices of the London Labour Party, and the special advantages of this being done should be obvious, for the L.L.P. brings to the assistance of the Local Parties the prestige of a powerful influence and driving force, and gives a character and strength to the effort that would certainly be lost if the campaign were not co-ordinated.

The details of the scheme are of course not yet complete, but we are glad to see that stress is laid on the importance of preparatory work. The preliminary suggestions that are put forward indicate that a personal "form" letter is contemplated, to be issued under the London Labour Party heading, by the Local Parties, to the electors or trade unionists, as the case may be. The proposals suggest that the scale of operation shall be as extensive as that of an all-London electoral campaign, even to the inclusion of the use of committee rooms, and the issue of the "form" letter will certainly be a tremendous task which can, however, be accomplished. It will be the biggest concerted piece of organisation Labour has yet attempted, and it is suggested cost should be divided. Other proposals include a poster campaign by the L.L.P. on the lines that were so signally successful at the London Municipal elections last year, newspaper advertising, and the issue of special leaflets. The actual details will be settled by a joint conference of the agents, secretaries, Women's Advisory Committee, and the E.C. of the London Party. We wish the campaign hearty success. And now what of Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Leeds and others? *It is time to start now.*

## OUT OF THE RUT.

### ACTIVITIES AND IDEAS IN BRIEF.

The "Whip" is, of course, a well-known Parliamentary institution and the number of underlinings have in themselves attained a language which expresses the degrees of urgency which attach to the summons issued. It is not often, however, that it is used outside the "House" or Parliamentary Debating Societies, and its use therefore in the example below for convening a specially important Party meeting is commendable, inasmuch as attention and emphasis are both attained in the form and in the novelty of the appeal.

#### WHIP.

#### KING'S LYNN DIVISIONAL PARTY.

Dear Sir,

I hope your Branch will be fully

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represented at the Special Extraordinary

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Meeting on Saturday next, October 9th,

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3 p.m., New Conduit Street Schools,

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King's Lynn. Business of urgency.

Yours sincerely,

H. STEPHENS,  
Agent and Gen. Sec.

Mr. T. W. Wright, of Shenstone Lodge, near Lichfield, the agent in the recent Wrekin Election, was responsible for some very striking literature during that campaign. The combined election address and poll-card, to be used without envelopes, fulfils all its purposes, without the submergence of any one of them. It is the best production for combined purposes that we have seen. The special election address to women electors, also a combination, was a bright idea and tastefully carried out. The election address, both general and women's, were on the lengthy side; and the general get-up, paragraphing

and pointers, succeeded in our opinion in adding attractiveness and readability. We trust Mr. Wright has some samples left—enclose stamp.

We would like to draw our readers' attention to the polling-sheets advertised by Mr. T. Summerbell in this issue. All of us who have been in charge of elections have felt the need of an efficient substitute for the cumbersome wall-boards of time-honoured usage. But the only substitute has been small improvement, and an almost equally objectionable monopoliser of limited space in a busy committee room. We strongly recommend the new and handy sheet which Mr. Summerbell issues, as the best substitute for the out-of-date wall-boards. Each sheet (15 x 20) contains 900 numbers, which may be begun at any desired figure to correspond with the commencing figure of the ward or polling-district register. The sheets may, if desired, be mounted on cardboard for use, but they are sold printed on paper. Parties intending purchasing for future elections serve no purpose by delaying their purchase. Such things should be bought now, and the use and value of them explained to workers. This applies also to canvass cards, of course, and other election requisites.

Mr. Herbert Morrison, the Secretary of the London Labour Party has instituted a very useful series of "Organisation Points" which are circulated to local secretaries, agents and Parliamentary candidates in the London area. Each issue is numbered and it is intended that after reading they should be filed for reference. The "points" should prove of great value to those responsible for local work, and the periodical issue of advice, instruction, news or guidance on electoral policy, in duplicated form, is a matter that should commend itself also to central secretaries of divided boroughs, and in some cases to secretaries of county federations. It helps and engenders "contact," which matters very much sometimes.

A very attractive calendar for 1921 has been issued by Mr. A. E. Meredith, the agent for the Kidderminster Division. The portrait of our friend, Mr. John Baker, the Labour Candidate



(of the Iron and Steel Trades Association) greets one out of a very tasteful ground of subdued and harmonised tint, which has been broken in two places to let in the names of local secretaries, and similar information. A bold tear-off calendar goes well with the rest. We understand the calendar is standardised by Messrs. Cheshire, whose advertisement appears in our pages, and that it is a proposition that admits of a sale at reasonable price, with a fair profit. While on this subject we can commend the correspondence folders mentioned in their advertisement as exceptional value. Many agents have availed themselves of this offer, and the Editor himself has over 400 in use. When sending, ask for particulars of office furnishings.

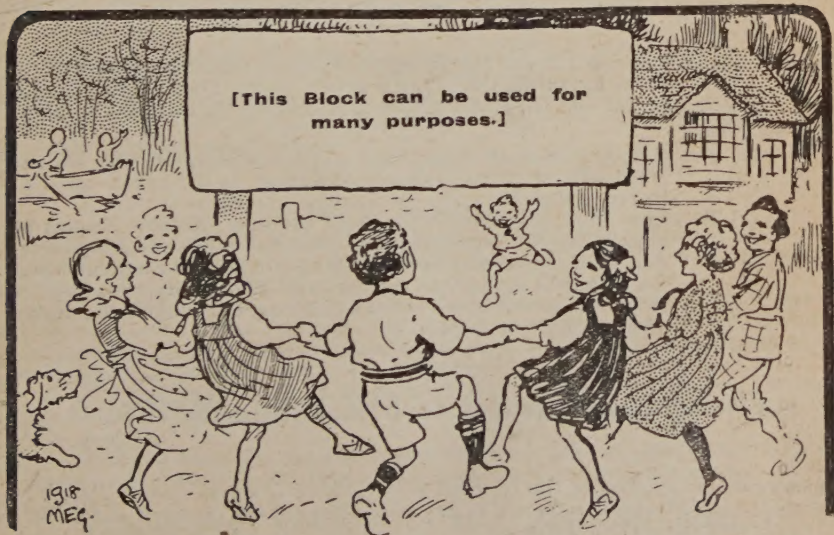
Hearty thanks to scores of our reader who were good enough to send samples of Municipal election literature. The best ideas are being noted and will be fully dealt with at a later date and at the best time. The issue of "November" literature was on the whole a marked improvement on anything Labour had previously done, and once again we would urge that with the high price of printing greater care must be spent on making what we issue more telling and more attractive. And it's true Labour teaching to en-

courage "art." You can do it with your printer, and it pays.

We noted in our November issue the sets of samples which were in circulation among the London and Home Counties agents. A particularly interesting set has reached us of literature issued from time to time by the Woolwich Labour Party, and printed at their own printing works, viz., the Pioneer Press, printers of this Journal. As an illustration of effectiveness and the life that can be imparted into even the commonest announcement we reproduce below a block which illustrated a certain election handbill. Our readers may find the same useful to them on many occasions and should apply to the printers as above.

*[Our readers are respectfully reminded that a stamped addressed envelope should accompany any request for samples or information made as a consequence of mention in this column. Inquiries should be sent direct, and not through the Editor. Addresses are always to be found in the Labour Party Scarborough Reports. When making inquiries, send samples of your own local work.]*

*Matters for mention in this column are cordially invited.—THE EDITOR.]*



# Our Competition Scheme for Labour Poster Artists.

(See also page 11.)

## BOARD OF ADJUDICATORS.

We have pleasure in announcing that the following gentlemen have kindly consented to act as Judges in the LABOUR ORGANISER Competition for Poster Artists :—

Mr. EGERTON P. WAKE (National Agent, The Labour Party)

The Rt. Hon. JOHN HODGE, M.P.

Mr. SIDNEY WEBB, and

Mr. A. G. WALKDEN (General Secretary, Railway Clerks' Association).

IS  
OFFERED  
IN PRIZES

# £25

BY THE  
EDITOR OF THE  
"LABOUR ORGANISER"

For the Discovery and Encouragement of Labour Poster Artists.

## OUR SCHEME EXPLAINED.

As briefly announced in our last issue, the LABOUR ORGANISER proposes to conduct a Competition for substantial Money Prizes among Poster Artists of all classes (Illustrators, Cartoonists, Litho Artists and Letterpress Printers) with the following objects :—

- (1) The discovery of fresh talent, and the introduction to the Labour Movement of Artists capable of adding to the effectiveness of its mural literature.
- (2) To secure from our readers, for early adoption, suitable designs or impressions for posters that are fitted for standardised reproduction on a commercial basis, for the use of Labour candidates and Local Parties throughout the country. Designs approved by the Adjudicators will be offered to the Labour Party, or other suitable quarters, for this purpose.

**Closing Date Extended to 31st JANUARY, 1921.**

*We desire it to be understood that the prize-money offered is not necessarily limited to £25. Additional or increased Prizes will be given should the merit and number of entries warrant that course.*



# Our Competition Scheme for Labour Poster Artists.

## LIST OF PRIZES AND RULES.

### CLASS I.

FOR "THE MARCH OF THE WORKERS."

**£10**

TEN POUNDS is offered for the best Cartoon, in one or three colours, depicting "The March of the Workers." A ground (or white) is desired in suitable place for short localised election message, or artist may suggest and depict a general message.

*All rejected attempts in this class will, if desired, be returned to senders.*

### CLASS II.

**£7/10**

SEVEN POUNDS, TEN SHILLINGS is offered for the best Cartoon, in one or three colours illustrating from the artist's own idea the general appeal of Political Labour. The same rule as to neutral ground for localisation purposes will apply (with the same exception) as in Class I.

**£7/10**

A SECOND PRIZE of £7 10s., or that sum divided into Second and Third Prize, will be given only if sufficient entries are secured.

### CLASS III.

**£5**

FIVE POUNDS is offered for the most effective letterpress Poster design suitable for printing off in quantity for later localisation. Designs may contain a block or letterpress illustration, but striking and pleasing design and gripping power will be the

guiding principle in judging attempts sent in. Paper may be either white, red or gold. Competitors able to send their attempts ready printed should do so, but if sketches are sent marginal notes should indicate size, name and character of type suggested, standard thicknesses of rule used, etc., and the same with ornaments.

### CLASS IV.

**£2/10**

This sum is offered for the best displayed Meeting B.II. Letterpress printers may send samples of work *already done*, or sketches (under the rules laid down in Class III.) of a suggested Meeting Bill of ordinary wording. Taste, general attractiveness, and

appeal will again decide the issue.

## NOTES TO COMPETITORS.

Competitors enter on the distinct understanding that all attempts sent in become the property of the LABOUR ORGANISER and cannot be returned. An exception will be made for Class I.

Competitors are requested to make no markings on the front of their attempts that would lead to identification. The name and address should in all cases be written on the back. Cartoonists will be given an opportunity to sign their work before reproduction if desired.

All attempts must reach the EDITOR (H. Drinkwater, Whittington, near Worcester) on or before 31st December, 1920. Registered post is advisable in certain classes.

The EDITOR reserves the right to withdraw any prize or prizes if the number of attempts sent in are, in his opinion, inadequate to ensure competition.

**Closing Date Extended to 31st JANUARY, 1921.**

## THE LABOUR PARTY TRAINING SCHEME FOR AGENTS AND ELECTION WORKERS.

### Graphic Illustration as an Aid to Training.

As many of our members are aware, a training scheme for both agents and local workers has for some time been in operation in the Midland Area, which prior to the recent reorganisation scheme was the only district, except Scotland, having a resident National Organiser (viz.: Mr. H. Drinkwater, the Editor of this Journal).

It is interesting now to review the progress of the scheme and to note the introduction of graphic methods of illustration as an aid to memory and interest.

The classes for agents, which are held at intervals in both the East and West Midlands, necessarily deal with more advanced problems in organisation and election technicalities than the local classes. The latter are held in convenient constituency centres, and are intended rather for the training of the army of voluntary workers necessary in all districts.

The agents' classes have been invariably well attended, despite the difficulties and expense of travelling, and interest has been sustained throughout. Many local Parties and employing Unions have wisely seen the advantage to themselves in their agents attending these meetings, and now defray the expenses. This ought to be done in every case. A peculiarity of the agents' classes, absent from the local classes, is the differing types of constituency conditions represented, although that situation is again modified by county agents having frequently borough conditions prevailing in parts of their constituencies. The attempt, however, to treat borough and county problems in Labour Party organisation, or even in technical matters, as entirely differing and separate questions would probably lead to fallacious conclusions, and certainly an incomplete treatment of the subjects taken; and the plan adopted of constant differentiation by the lecturer of what is intended for this or that type of constituency has undoubtedly proved in practice the more satisfactory one, and the comparisons made in resulting discussion have helped to spread enlightenment.

The local classes have always been well attended, except that the large divided boroughs, with that innervation which yet pursues them, seem unable to muster for a number of divisions an interest sufficient even for one. In other places, classes of over 100 persons have met. The weakness (or is it the moral strength) of our Party is amusingly illustrated at all the first meetings of local classes (where the national structure and working of the Party is outlined) by the tendency in subsequent questions and discussion to wander away from the material side of the Party, which is the subject of the lecture, into academic regions and on to subjects of Party policy, which is outside the scope of the classes. With local classes prior care is exercised to ascertain the general conditions of the constituency, and this is borne in mind in the lectures.

The subjects taken in local classes include a History and Outline of the Structure of the Labour Party, its national machinery, publications and working, its local constitution (as applicable), individual membership, local finance, development of local committees, Trade Union relationships and cementing same, conduct of local Parties, the register and its proper working, hints on propaganda, organisation of meetings, demonstrations, etc., the social side of the movement, canvassing, conduct of local and Parliamentary elections, registration work for the Party, the franchises, simple explanations of the Ballot Act, Corrupt Practices Act, etc., and similar subjects; and in all cases the why and wherefore is sought to be explained as this materially aids understanding and recollection.

The agents' subjects obviously exclude many of the above matters. We have had "Preparation for an Election," "The Duties, Status and Equipment of a Parliamentary Agent," "Indoor Organisation: filing, indexing, and notes on routine," "Organising methods for all types of constituencies" (two lectures), "Parliamentary Elections" (three lectures), etc., and other subjects are, "What an Agent should know about Paper and Printing," "Registration Methods," "Municipal and Local Government Electioneering," "The Ballot Acts," "Modern Advertising," etc., etc.



A feature of all the lectures in either agents' or local workers' classes has been the display of samples, specimens of matter, etc., applicable to the lecture. Thus, in organising methods, we see various devices and forms that have been successfully used elsewhere, with information as far as practicable as to results obtained. Displays of posters, leaflets, membership cards, committee room equipment, publications, canvass systems of various kinds, election addresses, etc., are on view for the appropriate lecture. The agents' lecture on "Indoor organisation, filing, etc.," was illustrated with suitable and modern equipment for the purpose, and costs gone into. Similarly, for the lecture on "What an agent should know about paper and printing," there are papermakers' sample books; card specimens; booklets showing standard sizes and qualities of paper, cards, envelopes, etc., and kindred information; type-founder's catalogue to illustrate "faces" and varieties of types and borders, and the first principles of typography; actual specimens of metal to illustrate the possibilities and limitations of type; specimens of work to show the uses of lithography; specimens of letterpress work to show the possibilities and right combinations in tinted papers and tinted inks; an advertisement "lay-out" is also given and it is shown how to calculate the number of lines or space certain matter will occupy in a given size of letter, thus to avoid the terrible "bloomers" in display one sometimes sees on meeting bills and posters, when a printer is given copy so drafted that it is a physical impossibility to give the display or prominence desired for a certain speaker or object.

To turn to the aspects of an agent's duty which entail a knowledge of the technicalities of election law, it is on this particularly unpromising subject that the most interesting experiment in graphic illustration has just been introduced. At comparatively small expense the complete equipment of a polling-booth has been obtained, down to the very last detail of the finger-pointers for the door, sealing wax, and the Old and New Testaments! Every form for every purpose is on hand which would carry through a complete election. Thus in lecturing on the Ballot Acts there is no need of a dreary, head-splitting ponderosity that

Labour men, not being lawyers, have never been attuned to. Instead, we get the exact atmosphere and arrangements of a polling-booth. The provisions of the Ballot Acts so far as they affect the general rights and privileges of the voters, the proper conduct of their duties by the officers, the duties of personation agents, and the privileges and obligations of individual voters, can all be got at by graphic and easily remembered illustration. Thus certain omissions are purposely made first of all in the proper notices to be displayed, and errors made in other arrangements. Those present are asked to point the errors out. A presiding officer and clerk takes the place of chairman and secretary, and voting proceeds. Here is illustrated the provisions as to the correct way of voting, the rights of blind voters, the illiterate, Jews, and also the provisions of the Police Disabilities Removal Act. A personation agent is now added to the officer and clerk and the equipment, functions, rights and responsibilities of his position are plainly seen and understood. A case of attempted personation is dealt with, and so on, each point and important provision being illustrated.

The above shows the stage to which training and illustration has so far been carried. But it has to be added that agents visit each other's offices where practicable if one agent is known to possess an adequate or efficient indoor equipment, or any special circumstance or knowledge to impart.

An extension of the idea acted upon in the mock polling-booth is in contemplation in regard to a "count." Here there are several methods of counting that could be illustrated, but the chief value of graphic illustration would lie in its opportunities for illustrating the many and often seemingly contradictory principles that unlie the dealing with spoilt and doubtful votes. An agent who has gone through an election doesn't forget the objections he took or the defences he made. But there's a lot he may not remember, and the new agent is worse off. But experience and actual handling of the cases is the surest thing to remember by and grasp the points.

Probably, then, graphic illustration will be tried in this matter also. We shall see.

## THE FINANCE OF LOCAL LABOUR PARTIES.

### How to Run a Successful Bazaar.

By W. B. LEWCOCK.

One may remark on the subject of Bazaars, as on most other subjects, "*Cherchez la femme.*"

We are fortunate in Stroud in having several Women's Sections. These had experienced some slight difficulty in keeping in touch with the members who can't get out at night, so afternoon meetings were suggested. Then someone suggested the old-fashioned but successful way of a sewing-class and a cup of tea. But what to sew for?—a Bazaar.

Stroud Division being not over-blessed with filthy lucre, the suggestion was eagerly adopted and the first step was taken by a visit being paid to all the Women's Sections with a view to getting them to work. We had, however, to deal with the question of provision of material. Our Sections were so keen on working that they solved this question at the beginning. One Section provided tea and cakes (given by a member) at each meeting, and by making a small charge secured a small regular income. Others got up children's concerts, whist drives, etc. Ultimately as the number of workers increased, we found it necessary for the Executive Committee of the Party to make a grant to each Section, and I believe this to be the best plan.

The women being all at work, we felt it was time to attack the men, so a circular was sent out to each committee in the division asking for delegates to attend a bazaar committee meeting, and bring with them suggestions for raising money. We then asked that each committee should, alone or jointly with another, be responsible for a stall. A plan had to be found for the utilisation of the work of those committees who did not feel able to do this, and we decided that the best way was to have a number of *general* stalls, so that no contribution could be too small, and no one could have an excuse for not sending something.

We had then to deal with the problem of getting people to the bazaar and of amusing them when they were there. The first we solved

by a splash in advertising. All the local hoardings were well plastered with red, white and green bills, 80 in. by 40 in., and in addition to this there were a good display of window-bills. We had printed tickets on sale, and though the return from these was not large they served a useful purpose in jogging people's memories. Certainly every penny of the money spent in advertisement was well spent, and I am convinced that one cannot do too much advertising. Next time we shall do more!

Having a Labour Choral Society simplified very much the amusement question. The women objected to a regular concert on the ground that either the selling would have to stop or the performers would not be heard, so the Choral Society gave items at intervals. A children's concert was given in another room. One of our committees added in no small way to the amusement of the evening by a "Mystery Stall" which was a scream.

When the great day came we opened out with twelve stalls. Five, run by the Women's Sections had all kinds of drapery. The Labour Choral Society ran a pound stall. A stall for general vegetable produce gave a chance for the men to bring in their handiwork, and had some of the finest leeks on it that were ever sold at a bazaar. A country stall had butter, eggs, cakes, jams, pickles, flowers and two sittings of eggs. A sweet stall was as attractive as ever. One committee ran a refreshment stall which was a huge success. We had a book stall to which members were invited to send old and new books, and which also showed a selection of the latest literature of the Party. The jumble stall was the first to sell out, though the bran-pie ran it close.

Well, we made a profit of £107, and hope to do as well, if not better, next time. Further, we consider that the bazaar did more than that for us. It kept the Sections keenly at work, brought a number of fresh people right into touch with things, and last but not least, was a splendid advertisement for the Party. We shall go on having bazaars, for anything that results in more workers, more money and more advertisement for the Party must not be passed over. To any Party that feels a need for any or all of these I can only say "Try a Bazaar."



## DISTRICT COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

### About Candidates.

Next month we shall give some tips on preparation for the District Council Elections due in three months' time. It is the preparation that matters in most cases, and it is none too early to seek to give to these elections the character of a Labour triumph which was absent from the Borough Election results.

The earlier candidates are selected the better.\* There is no sound purpose served in seeking to out-manceuvre the enemy, or obscure the direction or places in which you will strike. The thought that after all you may not fight in their district does not encourage the workers in these localities to get ready. On the contrary, "tactics" in these matters often only damages your own machine, and the morale of it. Get ready to fight, and extend your battle-line to every yard of territory where you've reasonably got a chance of inspiring your own cause and showing a respectable return.

But a special advantage of early selection of candidates lies also in the opportunities of getting them together for a discussion of the tasks and problems before them as Labour candidates. This side of preparation is generally woefully neglected, and if meetings are held they mostly take on the nature of election committee meetings pure and simple, and the equipment and conduct of the campaign is dealt with, rather than, as should be in this case, the equipment and conduct of the candidates for their responsibilities both before or after election.

There is sometimes a difficulty in getting candidates, and it is frequently because men (and they are usually the best men) do not feel qualified for office and competent to meet discussion on questions that may arise bearing on the work of governing bodies during or after election. This is particularly true of women, who add to a naturally retiring disposition a more acute sensibility of educational shortcomings.

But the difficulty can be got over. Candidates should meet to discuss these questions. Those already serving on the body to which the elections take place can bring experience of great value to the aid of fresh candidates. Where a Labour group already exists

on a public body, the fresh candidates should be admitted where possible to listen to its deliberations.

There is a great difference sometimes in the powers even of elective bodies of the same category, Urban Councils for instance, and candidates should know these powers and the limitations of the Council to which they aspire.

The Labour Party publish in the "Handbook of Local Government" an invaluable aid to candidates and elected persons. But candidates especially should read this. It should be in the library of the Local Party, and if it is not there it may well be the very first election expense incurred, or a dozen ordered at wholesale rates for re-sale. But, anyway, with time by the forelock, don't perfect your machine and neglect the equipment of the candidates. Give *them* a chance, and you will find that Labour's raw material is sufficiently abundant and fertile to furnish you with a better side and a bigger one than the other parties can put in the field.



### NOTES ON ORGANISATION IN MINING CONSTITUENCIES.

By W. HARRIS

(S. Wales Miners' Political Organiser.)

The aim of every organiser should be to produce results, and the successful organiser is not the one that produces an elaborate plan on paper with a determination to apply these highly elaborate plans in *any* district in which he may be engaged, but it is he who devises a plan that will be applicable to the particular district in which he may at the moment be engaged in. Hence the organiser who has had experience and training in a town would have to scrap many of his methods as town organiser when dealing with a county constituency. The method even in a county constituency would have to be changed considerably as between a rural and urban constituency. Similarly, again he would have to change his method in an urban county constituency, where he found one industry largely predominating over other industries in the constituency. This was the situation I found myself in when I took over the duties as political

agent for the South Wales Miners' Federation in the Monmouthshire area.

The three constituencies of which I have control, namely Abertillery, Ebbw Vale and Bedwellty, are largely mining with a few important centres of steel workers and railwaymen. In these constituencies, organisation is decentralised. There are fourteen Trades and Labour Councils which are also Local Labour Parties. In the Abertillery Division the four Trades Councils are the constituent bodies from which the Divisional Labour Party is elected. In the Ebbw Vale Division there are three Trades Councils forming the constituent bodies of the Divisional Labour Party. In the Bedwellty Division there are seven Trades Councils forming the constituent bodies of the Divisional Labour Party. As far as possible, the areas covered by these Trades Councils are co-terminus with those of the Urban District for Local Government purposes and the political activities of Labour in connection with Local Labour representation within these areas are controlled by these Trades Councils and Local Labour Parties. Individual groups are established in the various villages and are linked up with the Trades and Labour Councils for their particular areas. This enables us to secure co-operation between the Labour members on the various Urban District Councils, Boards of Guardians and County Councils of the particular area.

The Trades and Labour Councils also undertake the work of registration under my supervision, and in the case of contested elections they carry on the whole of the Election work in their respective areas.

The organisation of the women electors is also greatly facilitated by means of these Trades Councils and Local Labour Parties. The method I usually adopt for the establishment of women sections is to appeal to the Trades Councils to supply me with a list of the names and addresses of women interested in the Labour Movement. Having obtained this list, I issue an invitation to the women whose names I receive to meet me at a convenient centre and bring with them any lady friends who through an oversight may not have received my invitation. At this

meeting I establish a Local section for women and then secure their affiliation to the Trades Council and Local Labour Parties, and through this organisation I secure the representation of women upon my Divisional Labour Parties.

The Trades Councils and Local Labour Parties are the driving forces in my three constituencies, as I have found from experience that if you can create the necessary atmosphere to secure local Labour representation, representation in Parliament by Labour naturally follows. As evidence of this, four out of the five Parliamentary seats in the County of Monmouth are held by Labour.

The success of this intensive cultivation of Local Labour representation is evidenced by the fact that the Monmouthshire County Council has a Labour majority; the Board of Guardians, whose area covers the whole of the Ebbw Vale Division and part of the Abertillery and Bedwellty Parliamentary Divisions, has a two-thirds Labour majority, and nine out of the ten Urban Councils in the area have also a Labour majority, the tenth being two short of a majority.

This scheme of organisation is quite simple, but in my opinion it is the best scheme that can be adapted for the district, and its success is its best recommendation. Having secured the majority of seats on the various Local Authorities, the interest of Labour is further safeguarded by the establishment of Labour groups upon the various Public Authorities who meet from time to time. When difficulties arise these difficulties are submitted to the various Trades Councils and Local Labour Parties for their opinion, and the members are mandated accordingly. The principle of self-determination in the local areas on purely local matters is applied to the fullest possible extent, and whenever necessary County Conferences are held to determine vital principles affecting the whole County.

This in brief is the scheme of organisation that has been applied in my area in Monmouthshire.

See Pages 10-11 for details  
of "The Labour Organiser"  
Prize Scheme for Poster Artists.



## THE ART OF ORGANISATION.

## An Interesting Lecture.

An interesting lecture on the above subject was given by Mr. A. W. Hildreth, Political Agent to the Derbyshire Miners, at a recent meeting of East Midland agents.

The lecturer explained his subject as differing from the science of organisation or electioneering, inasmuch as the latter, to his definition, stood principally for the rules and technicalities of electioneering and similar subjects. The art of organisation was more closely concerned with psychology and a knowledge of the material one handled, and how to get it working. He ventured two cardinal principles: (1) that Impulse was at present a greater factor in electioneering than Conviction, and (2) that Personality plays a greater part than Principle in the impulses of the elector. The lecturer proceeded to expound and defend the position taken up by giving instances from his own experience. He emphasised the necessity of intelligently handling Impulse, and gave several instances of good poster work in which the guiding principle had been to create an impulse, a feeling that would push the voter over the border-line. He gave instances where *reiteration* had created an impulse. It was not conviction, but the impulse in the way desired that had been created—leading, of course, to the later settled conviction. In dealing with Personality the lecturer instanced the power of that force both to repel and to attract, and he proceeded to give some hints on the use of an agent's own character-force in dealing with situations that commonly arise in the course of his duties. The subject was then somewhat departed from in order to give a useful birds-eye view of the constituency preparations he advocated, although many of the preparations gave evidence of the speaker's belief in applied psychology as a profound force in determining an agent's proceedings. Some of the speaker's deductions were afterwards challenged. The practical application, however, of personality and psychology to an agent's everyday work elicited considerable interest and a very practical series of experiences.

## ASSOCIATION NEWS.

Mr. W. H. Hargreaves is shortly transferring from Gloucester to the Gainsborough Division of Lincolnshire.

Mr. L. Fothergill, of Coventry, has now relinquished his agency, having received an appointment with the Co-operative Party at Leeds.

We regret that Mr. A. J. White, of Bridgewater has resigned owing to ill-health. Mr. Z. Andrews has also resigned his agency in Buckingham Division, and Mr. B. H. Saunders has now relinquished office at Hemel Hempstead.

New appointments not previously announced in THE LABOUR ORGANISER are: Mr. H. V. S. Carey, Croydon; Mr. Rbt. A. Watson, North Norfolk; Mr. H. Hall, Altrincham; Mr. P. Osborne Langton, Uxbridge; Mr. W. Burrows, Maldon; Mr. T. H. Richardson, Bournemouth; Mr. J. Beckett, Limehouse.

The East and West Midland Sections have both met during the past month, with good attendances. The South Wales and South Western Section met at Bristol, and voted a sum from district funds to be used in relieving the rail fares for more distant members. Four Association Districts have agreed to assist the heavy national expenditure on wages deputations and negotiations by foregoing their local proportion of subscription for the time being.

The Lancashire and Cheshire Agents met at Bolton on the 8th ult. The special value to the movement of the attendance of all political agents at the Party's Annual Conference was discussed, and steps suggested for securing this point of view being put before all bodies responsible for sending delegates. A discussion on THE LABOUR ORGANISER showed a high appreciation of its usefulness, and steps were suggested to extend its circulation among ward secretaries, etc. At the next meeting papers will be read on local Labour Party finance, and the proposal to establish a Co-operative Purchasing Society will be discussed.

London group continues to grow owing to new appointments of agents.

The agenda for next meeting is before us as we go to press. The agents will discuss the interchange of samples of literature, Co-operative buying, a proposal that Parliamentary candidates should occasionally address the agents' meetings, and schemes for pushing THE LABOUR ORGANISER. We notice elsewhere the London agents' activities concerning the great push for individual members.

Agents are earnestly asked to make known our poster competition among artist friends and their own printers. Many agents have posters they can submit, and should unhesitatingly send in what they think is their best effort.



### THE POWERS, DUTIES AND LIABILITIES OF AN ELECTION AGENT.

#### The Leading Book on the Subject.

The election agent who is without his "Parker's" is a ship without a rudder. The latest edition of Parker's "Powers, Duties and Liabilities of an Election Agent and of a Returning Officer," which has been revised and brought right down to date by Mr. Oscar F. Dowson, fills just that hiatus which has been felt by all election agents since the Representation of the People Act, 1918, so materially altered the law and practice concerning Parliamentary Elections. I have by me one of the earliest editions of this book side by side with the latest edition, and I have handled each edition that has been published since. In all those years the work of the late Frank R. Parker has held first place as the text-book on the legal aspects of electioneering. Painstaking, scrupulously accurate, minute in detail, a readable and sensible interpretation and dissertation on the law, no agent who realise the perils that beset him and his candidate, before, during and even after an election, dare be without it. Agents will sometimes ask for a book on electioneering not always realising that there is a vital difference between that which purports to explain the arts of electioneering and the "working" of an election, and a book which stands out above the storm and stress of con-

flict and calmly lays down the law. And agents who have possessed themselves of heavy treatises on the Representation of the People Act are a very, very long way from complete equipment on the subject of this book. The 1918 Act amended, repealed, re-enacted and also left alone much of the law of elections. A treatise on that Act is essential to registration work, but it would be a very incomplete and unsatisfactory guide on the technicalities of an agent's powers and duties, and the intricacies of elections. No lawyer would be without it. Would then our laymen venture where the — fear to tread?

To attempt to review Parker's in the ordinary way in which one reviews a novel or a lay book would be to attempt to reduce to paragraph proportions a subject too big for that treatment. There are 1,141 pages, and from the table of abbreviations to the voluminous and (to you and I) most useful index, there is nothing to be spared. Some of the chapters where the original text has been altered owing to R.P. amendments throw new light on certain aspects of the late Act, not always treated of in the registration text-books; and the table of cases cited always makes Parker's an armoury that one feels has reserves that are not backed by mere opinion. It is interesting to note in some places comments on past decisions or conclusions that suggest the new circumstances of the enlarged electorate and women enfranchisement, might themselves be factors modifying the decisions or conclusions referred to.

But, anyway, get the book, if you would be a real, live and well-armed election agent. Law and printing, like everything else, is "up," but it's dearer still to be without it.

The Powers, Duties and Liabilities of an Election Agent, 1920. Chas. Knight & Co., Ltd., 227, Tooley Street, S.E.1. Price 63s. Postage extra.



### OUR AGENTS AT HOME.

Owing to pressure on our space this feature has this month been omitted. An interesting and instructive visit will, however, be reported upon in the next issue.



The International Advertising Exhibition at the White City did not escape the notice and study of Labour Party agents. On one occasion a group of London and Home County agents visited the show, and the enterprise and interest thus shown is be commended.



We understand the Harris Cycle Co., who are advertising in this issue are making a very special offer to readers of THE LABOUR ORGANISER. We can thoroughly recommend their cycles, and this firm manufactures for many Co-operative Societies. Our readers are actually offered a most exceptional opportunity of buying a new mount of highest standard at what is really a bargain price. It's well to place the order now. If you don't require a new bike, the juveniles' and ladies' mounts are equal value and give you an easy conscience for some time to come.

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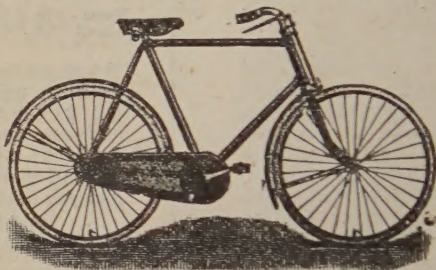
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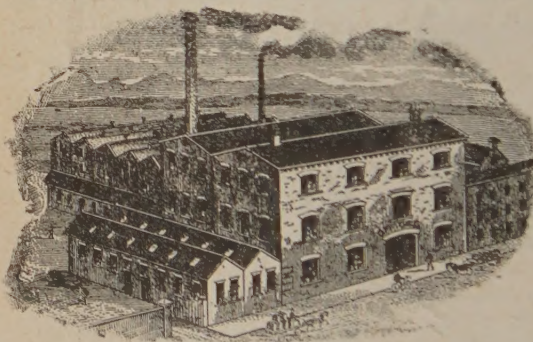
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